

In the claims:

1. **(currently amended)** A method of preparing a gel polymer, comprising the steps of:
polymerizing monomers in the presence of ~~an~~ a molecular imprinter, wherein said molecular imprinter comprises two ionic functional groups connected by a tether, which tether comprises a breakable covalent bond, and at least two polymerizable double bonds, to give a gel polymer; and
treating said gel polymer with a mixture comprising a reagent that breaks ~~[[a]]~~ said breakable covalent bond in the tether of said molecular imprinter.
2. **(original)** A gel polymer prepared according to the method of claim 1.
3. **(currently amended)** A monomer comprised of the following three parts: two or more polymerizable double bonds, two or more functional groups connected by a tether, which tether comprises ~~[[, and]]~~ a breakable covalent bond ~~[[that links said functional groups]]~~.
4. **(original)** The monomer of claim 3, wherein the functional groups are selected from the group consisting of a quaternary ammonium group, a secondary amino group, a hydrophobic alkyl group, an aromatic group, an imidazole group, and a methylimidazolium group.
5. **(currently amended)** A method of molecularly imprinting polymer networks ~~without using a template~~, comprising the steps of co-polymerizing the monomer of claim 3 and subsequently breaking the breakable covalent bond of said tether.
6. **(original)** The monomer of claim 3, wherein the breakable bond is a 1,2-glycol bond.
7. **(currently amended)** The ~~monomer~~ method of claim 5, wherein the monomer is 2,3-Dihydroxy-N,N,N',N'-tetramethyl-N,N'-bis{3-[(2-methylacryloyl)amino]propyl}-1,4-butanediaminium dihalide.
8. **(currently amended)** A method of molecularly imprinting polymer networks ~~without using a template~~, comprising the steps of co-polymerizing the monomer described in claim ~~[[5]]~~ 4; and subsequently breaking the breakable covalent bond of said tether.
9. **(original)** A polymer network prepared by the method of claim 7.

10. **(currently amended)** A method of molecularly imprinting polymer networks ~~without using a template~~, comprising the steps of co-polymerizing the monomer described in claim 6; and subsequently breaking the breakable covalent bond of said tether.
11. **(original)** A polymer network prepared by the method of claim 9.
12. **(currently amended)** Separation materials comprising the gel polymer of claim [[2]] 1.
13. **(original)** Separation materials comprising the polymer network of claim 8.
14. **(original)** Separation materials comprising the polymer network of claim 10.
15. **(currently amended)** Sensors comprising the gel polymer of claim [[2]] 1.
16. **(original)** Sensors comprising the polymer network of claim 8.
17. **(original)** Sensors comprising the polymer network of claim 10.